

"I'd be glad to serve you if I could. But, take my word for it, I'd be only injuring you if I did what you ask me."

Poor Martin Dwyer couldn't see the matter in this light at all, and returned home thinking very hardly of his neighbor, who would be "leaving it all behind him" some day.

Mrs. Cormack was then very glad to hear her husband say that he would wish to give Tom Dwyer a helping hand. It was a proof to her that Tom possessed worldly prudence in addition to the other good qualities with which she herself had always credited him.

"I declare," said her husband, observing the bright, animated expression of her face at the moment, "you look as young as ever you did. I am not surprised that strangers take you for your daughter's sister. I must take care of myself, or you will be a formidable rival to them. I'd bet my life Tom Dwyer would prefer you to Margaret. But what do you really think about O'Keeffe?"

Before replying, she took a field-glass from the table and going to the window directed it towards the mountain.

"Yes," she remarked, "I guessed it was Tom. He is leaning against Corrigdhoun. He seems to be rather given to loitering about lately. I thought you might have set him down as an idler, and was rather surprised at what you have just said about him."

"He does all he has to do that is worth doing," returned her husband. "He requires a motive for exertion. But he really does more than many young fellows I know, who make a great show of industry. I have often watched him doing two men's work, and yet when he'd stroll over to the bridge after, you'd think by him that he had spent the day rambling about. I'd like to see him get a fair start."

"Ah!" his wife replied with an unconscious sigh, "there is more in Tom Dwyer than you think." But lowering the glass, she added somewhat absently, as if she wished to change the subject, "I see Mr. Armstrong with the two children in the orchard; I am really very glad to see him able to fish again. I hope he will come over by-and-by. There is Alice singing one of his songs. I sometimes think she is fairly in love with him. She does not seem to care about the society of young men. But she always brightens up when she sees Mr. Armstrong or Father Feehan."

"I think she is very like her poor aunt Aileen in many ways," said Mr. Cormack thoughtfully; "you must be careful of her health."

"Oh, she is quite strong now," was the rather hastily uttered reply.

"She seems to be quite unlike Margaret," the father observed. "She'll probably be a nun."

"You asked me what I thought of Mr. O'Keeffe," Mrs. Cormack remarked, turning from the window and replacing the field glass on the table. "I confess I am beginning to feel uneasy. People will talk—but that's not what I care most about. If Margaret really liked him, and if you were opposed to the match, I'd be very anxious about the result."

"You don't mean," said her husband, smiling, "that Margaret is the sort of girl that would pine away and die of a broken heart?"

"No, indeed," she replied. "Perhaps, I'd rather she was. But I fear that Mr. O'Keeffe is not over scrupulous."

"Do you mean to suggest that she might elope?" her husband interrupted in evident astonishment.

"Well, not quite so bad as that," she rejoined. "But things might turn out very unpleasantly if she set her heart upon marrying him, and if you refused to give whatever fortune he required."

"Oh, nonsense," returned Ned Cormack,

rising and buttoning his coat across his chest. "I'll probably be able to come at what he means to-night. Hillo! Eddy! Get your hat till we go and see the young lambs."

"Don't forget that Father Feehan and Mr. O'Keeffe are to be here early," said Mrs. Cormack as her husband passed the window. Ned Cormack replied merely by a nod, as, holding his son by the hand, he murmured to himself—

"My little boy! My little boy!" in tones of the deepest tenderness.

(To be continued.)

IRISH READINGS

(Edited by A. M. SULLIVAN, M.P., and T. D. SULLIVAN, M.P.)

THE MISSION OF WOMEN.

(From the *Nation* of October 19, 1844.)

To the women of Ireland it is thought fit, in these days of our strife for liberty, to address a word of affectionate remonstrance.

That they have a part, and an important part, in the work to be done, we hope and desire to prove to them. Once awakened to the knowledge that there is a duty which they have overlooked, we are assured that it will be religiously fulfilled. We are constantly hearing that "women have no business with politics." This we deny. If politics be, as a great woman has most justly defined them, "Morals—i.e., of equal concern to all," it is not only the business but the duty of every woman to be cognisant of what implicates and determines her own happiness, and that of all dear to her. But we take a broader ground than even this—one more befitting, as it seems to us, the disinterested nature of women. We conceive that in her pure and noble heart should be found a principle second only in strength to her devotion to God—the love of her native land. Why is man to engross a feeling to which both sexes have so obviously an equal title? Every high and lofty affection is found far purer and more intense in woman than in man. With her no love of gain, no self-seeking, mingles with the holy strength of her impulses. But, alas! with rare exceptions, women have been taught to fear the cherishing of the purest earthly affection. They dread the sneers of "the world." They fear to tear aside the tissue of false prejudice in which the great fact has been enwrapped and concealed, that *active* patriotism is a duty bearing equally upon man and woman.

We want to teach them that there is something far higher than this world-applause—something which amply compensates for its sneers. The world says, too, that "women are not to meddle in politics"; and if by this is meant meddling *publicly*, the world is right. This is not a woman's sphere, and we should more deeply regret to see her so "unsex" herself than we now deplore the unfulfilled duty which is in her province. But it is not needed. God has placed woman in a sphere by which it is plain that He intends her to influence man to all that is good and holy. In every stage of her life she has this to do; and in every stage of her life she does exert an incalculable influence either to the well-being or prejudice of those around her. This every man feels, let him admit it

or not—and it is the extreme importance of this influence being well directed that we wish to awaken our countrywomen.

A woman's sphere is her home—her school her fireside, where she has all holy things to teach. Why has *one great* lesson been so constantly forgotten? We every day see woman among the objects of her influence—her *pupils*, in short, though she and they may know it not—and we see her eye brighten and her cheek flush as she reads or tells of some brave man's struggle for the freedom of his fatherland! The names of those men are heroes with her, as they ought to be. She worships Washington, Hofer, Tell, and such as they, with all a woman's beautiful enthusiasm; but it too seldom occurs to her that she, too, has a country to love—to cherish—as they loved theirs, and that if she fulfilled her "mission" well and rightly, some of her own dear ones might go down to all ages with names as brilliant, as soul-stirring, as those *she* reverences, as examples to all time.

No one denies, at all events, the fact, that every man ought to be a patriot, whatever meaning he may attach to that word. Everybody respects and admires a man who knows he has a duty to fulfil by his country, and who does fulfil it according to his views. Who is so fit to instil one feeling more, which will elevate and purify the heart which receives it rightly, as she who teaches all else? Let us not be told that the subject is too deep or grave for her. There are deeper and graver ones which (amid all the heresies put forth against the mission of women) we have never heard her right to impart denied her. This is but one of the many of the false theories by which the sphere of woman's usefulness has been limited and narrowed, which have been received without inquiry or examination as established facts, and which need but a little investigation to fall to pieces. We maintain that a woman's sphere and duty are to teach *all things* good and ennobling.

To do this well, a woman must do more than *feel*. Irishwomen! you who have husbands, brothers, and sons, look and see whether the love and reverence they bear you does not sway them towards your opinions—you, who can teach them by your gentle influence to love God, His laws, charity, peace, purity, affection, why should you deem it